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No. 6

GRADED POETRY READERS

ALEXANDER-BLAKE



MAYNARD, MERRILL, & COMPANY

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GRADED POETRY READERS

SIXTH YEAR

EDITED BY

KATHERINE D. BLAKE

PRINCIPAL GIRLS' DEPARTMENT PUBLIC SCHOOL NO. 6,
NEW YORK CITY

AND

GEORGIA ALEXANDER

SUPERVISING PRINCIPAL, INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA



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INTRODUCTION

POETRY is the chosen language of childhood and youth. The baby repeats words again and again for the mere joy of their sound : the melody of nursery rhymes gives a delight which is quite independent of the meaning of the words. Not until youth approaches maturity is there an equal pleasure in the rounded periods of elegant prose. It is in childhood therefore that the young mind should be stored with poems whose rhythm will be a present delight and whose beautiful thoughts will not lose their charm in later years.

The selections for the lowest grades are addressed primarily to the feeling for verbal beauty, the recognition of which in the mind of the child is fundamental to the plan of this work. The editors have felt that the inclusion of critical notes in these little books intended for elementary school children would be not only superfluous, but, in the degree in which critical comment drew the child's attention from the text, subversive of the desired result. Nor are there any notes on methods. The best way to teach children to love a poem is to read it inspiringly to them. The French say : "The ear is the pathway to the heart." A poem should be so read that it will sing itself in the hearts of the listening children.

In the brief biographies appended to the later books the human element has been brought out. An effort has been made to call attention to the education of the poet and his equipment for his life work rather than to the literary qualities of his style.

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Over earth and ocean with gentle motion
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea ;
5 Over the rills and the crags and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream under mountain or stream
The spirit he loves remains ;
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,
10 Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead :
15 As on the jag of a mountain crag
Which an earthquake rocks and swings
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And, when sunset may breathe, from the lit sea
beneath,
20 Its ardors of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest on mine airy nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbèd maiden with white fire laden
Whom mortals call the moon
Glides glimmering o'er my fleecelike floor
By the midnight breezes strewn ;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet, 5
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The stars peep behind her and peer.
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee
Like a swarm of golden bees, 10
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent, —
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

EDMUND SPENSER

ENGLAND, 1552-1599

Autumn

Then came the autumn all in yellow clad, 15
As though he joyed in his plenteous store,
Laden with fruits that made him laugh, full glad
That he had banished hunger, which to-fore
Had by the belly oft him pinchèd sore :

Upon his head a wreath, that was enroll'd
With ears of corn of every sort, he bore ;
And in his hand a sickle he did hold,
To reap the ripen'd fruits the which the earth had
yold.

JOHN KEATS

ENGLAND, 1795-1821

To Autumn

- 5 Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness !
Close bosom friend of the maturing sun ;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch eaves
run ;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage trees,
10 And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core ;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel ; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
15 For Summer has o'erbrimmed their clammy cells.
- Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store ?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ;

Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy
hook

Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers :
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook ; • 5
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring ? Ay, where are
they ?

Think not of them, thou hast thy music, too, —
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day, 10
And touch the stubble plains with rosy hue ;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the night wind lives or dies ;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ; 15
Hedge crickets sing ; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

JOHN TOWNSEND TROWBRIDGE

AMERICA, 1827—

Midwinter

The speckled sky is dim with snow,
The light flakes falter and fall slow ;
Athwart the hilltop, rapt and pale,
Silently drops a silvery veil ;
5 And all the valley is shut in
By flickering curtains gray and thin.

But cheerily the chickadee
Singeth to me on fence and tree ;
The snow sails round him as he sings,
10 White as the down of angels' wings.

I watch the slow flakes as they fall
On bank and brier and broken wall ;
Over the orchard, waste and brown,
All noiselessly they settle down,
15 Tipping the apple boughs and each
Light quivering twig of plum and peach.

On turf and curb and bower roof
The snowstorm spreads its ivory woof ;
It paves with pearl the garden walk ;

And lovingly round tattered stalk
And shivering stem its magic weaves
A mantle fair as lily leaves.

The hooded beehive, small and low,
Stands like a maiden in the snow ; 5
And the old door slab is half hid
Under an alabaster lid.

All day it snows : the sheeted post
Gleams in the dimness like a ghost ;
All day the blasted oak has stood 10
A muffled wizard of the wood ;
Garland and airy cap adorn
The sumach and the wayside thorn,
And clustering spangles lodge and shine
In the dark tresses of the pine. 15

The ragged bramble, dwarfed and old,
Shrinks like a beggar in the cold ;
In surplice white the cedar stands,
And blesses him with priestly hands.

Still cheerily the chickadee 20
Singeth to me on fence and tree :
But in my inmost ear is heard
The music of a holier bird ;

And heavenly thoughts as soft and white
As snowflakes on my soul alight,
Clothing with love my lonely heart,
Healing with peace each bruised part,
5 Till all my being seems to be
Transfigured by their purity.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

AMERICA, 1819-1891

The First Snowfall

The snow had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
10 With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
And the poorest twig on the elm tree
Was ridged inch deep with pearl.

15 From sheds new-roofed with Carrara
Came Chanticleer's muffled crow,
The stiff rails softened to swan's-down,
And still fluttered down the snow.

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snowbirds,
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn 5
Where a little headstone stood ;
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, " Father, who makes it snow ? " 10
And I told of the good All-father
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snowfall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow, 15
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar that renewed our woe. 20

And again to the child I whispered,
" The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall ! "

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her ;
And she, kissing back, could not know
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

AMERICA, 1803-1882

The Snowstorm

- 5 Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farmhouse at the garden's end.
- 10 The sled and traveler stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, inclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

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CHARLES KINGSLEY

ENGLAND, 1819-1875

The Three Fishers

Three fishers went sailing out into the west —
Out into the west as the sun went down ;
Each thought of the woman who loved him the
best,

And the children stood watching them out of the
town ;

For men must work and women must weep, 5
And there's little to earn and many to keep,
Though the harbor bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower,
And trimmed the lamps as the sun went down ;
And they looked at the squall and they looked 10
at the shower ;

And the rack it came rolling up, ragged and
brown ;

But men must work and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
And the harbor bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands 15
In the morning gleam as the tide went down,

And the women are watching and wringing their
hands,
For those who will never come back to the town ;
For men must work and women must weep —
And the sooner it's over the sooner to sleep —
5 And good-by to the bar and its moaning.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

ENGLAND, 1770-1850

Lucy

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love ;

10 A violet by a mossy stone,
Half hidden from the eye ;
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky !

15 She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me !

CHARLES MACKAY

SCOTLAND, 1814-1889

The Miller of the Dee

There dwelt a miller, hale and bold,
Beside the river Dee;
He worked and sang from morn till night —
No lark more blithe than he;
And this the burden of his song 5
Forever used to be:
“I envy nobody — no, not I —
And nobody envies me!”

“Thou’rt wrong, my friend,” said good King Hal,
“As wrong as wrong can be; 10
For could my heart be light as thine,
I’d gladly change with thee.
And tell me now, what makes thee sing,
With voice so loud and free,
While I am sad, though I’m a king, 15
Beside the river Dee?”

The miller smiled, and doffed his cap,
“I earn my bread,” quoth he;
“I love my wife, I love my friend,
I love my children three; 20

I owe no penny I cannot pay,
I thank the river Dee
That turns the mill that grinds the corn
That feeds my babes and me."

- 5 "Good friend," said Hal, and sighed the while,
"Farewell, and happy be ;
But say no more, if thou'dst be true,
That no one envies thee ;
Thy mealy cap is worth my crown,
10 Thy mill my kingdom's fee ;
Such men as thou are England's boast,
O miller of the Dee !"
-

GEORGE GORDON NOEL, LORD BYRON

ENGLAND, 1788-1824

The Destruction of Sennacherib

- The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and
gold ;
15 And the sheen of their spears was like stars on
the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep
Galilee.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB 23

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is
green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen ;
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath
blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and
strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the 5
blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd ;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and
chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever
grew still !

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his 10
pride ;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his
mail ;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone, 15
The lances unlifted, the trumpets unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the
 sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.

JAMES MONTGOMERY

SCOTLAND, 1771-1854

Arnold Winkelried

- 5 "Make way for liberty!" he cried;
"Make way for liberty," and died.
In arms the Austrian phalanx stood,
A living wall, a human wood! —
A wall, where every conscious stone
10 Seemed to its kindred thousands grown;
A rampart all assaults to bear,
Till time to dust their frames should wear.
So dense, so still the Austrians stood,
A living wall, a human wood!
15 Impregnable their front appears,
All horrent with projected spears,
Whose polished points before them shine,
From flank to flank, one brilliant line,

Bright as the breakers' splendors run
Along the billows, to the sun.

Opposed to these a hovering band
Contended for their native land ;
Peasants, whose new-found strength had broke, 5
From manly necks the ignoble yoke,
And forged their fetters into swords,
On equal terms to fight their lords ;
And what insurgent rage had gained,
In many a mortal fray maintained : 10
Marshaled, once more, at Freedom's call,
They came to conquer or to fall, —
When he who conquered, he who fell,
Was deemed a dead or living Tell !

Such virtue had that patriot breathed, 15
So to the soil his soul bequeathed,
That wheresoe'er his arrows flew,
Heroes in his own likeness grew,
And warriors sprang from every sod
Which his awakening footstep trod. 20

And now the work of life and death
Hung on the passing of a breath :
The fire of conflict burned within, —
The battle trembled to begin.

Yet, while the Austrians held their ground,
Point for attack was nowhere found;
Where'er the impatient Switzers gazed,
The unbroken line of lances blazed;
5 The line 'twere suicide to meet,
And perish at their tyrants' feet; —
How could they rest within their graves
And leave their homes the homes of slaves?
Would they not feel their children tread
10 With clanging chains above their head?

It must not be: — this day, this hour,
Annihilates the oppressor's power.
All Switzerland is in the field;
She will not fly, — she cannot yield, —
15 She must not fall: her better fate
Here gives her an immortal date.
Few were the numbers she could boast;
But every freeman was a host,
And felt as though himself were he,
20 On whose sole arm hung victory.

It did depend on one indeed;
Behold him — Arnold Winkelried!
There sounds not to the trump of fame
The echo of a nobler name.

Unmarked he stood amid the throng,
In rumination deep and long,
Till you might see with sudden grace,
The very thought come o'er his face;
And, by the motion of his form, 5
Anticipate the bursting storm;
And, by the uplifting of his brow,
Tell where the bolt would strike; and how.

But 'twas no sooner thought than done!
The field was in a moment won : 10
"Make way for liberty!" he cried,
Then ran with arms extended wide,
As if his dearest friend to clasp;
Ten spears he swept within his grasp.
"Make way for liberty!" he cried; 15
Their keen points met from side to side;
He bowed amongst them like a tree,
And thus made way for liberty.

Swift to the breach his comrades fly,
"Make way for liberty!" they cry, 20
And through the Austrian phalanx dart,
As rushed the spears through Arnold's heart;
While instantaneous as his fall,
Rout, ruin, panic, scattered all;

An earthquake could not overthrow
A city with a surer blow.
Thus Switzerland again was free ;
Thus DEATH made way for LIBERTY !

THOMAS MOORE

IRELAND, 1779-1852

The Minstrel Boy

- 5 The minstrel boy to the war is gone,
 In the ranks of death you'll find him,
 His father's sword he has girded on,
 And his wild harp slung behind him.
 "Land of song!" said the warrior bard,
10 Though all the world betrays thee,
 One sword, at least, thy rights shall guard,
 One faithful harp shall praise thee !
- The minstrel fell ! but the foeman's chain
 Could not bring his proud soul under ;
15 The harp he loved ne'er spoke again,
 For he tore its chords asunder,
 And said, "No chains shall sully thee,
 Thou soul of love and bravery !
 Thy songs were made for the pure and free,
20 They shall never sound in slavery."

GEORGE GORDON NOEL, LORD BYRON

ENGLAND, 1788-1824

The Isles of Greece

The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece !

Where burning Sappho lov'd and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace —

Where Delos rose, and Phoebus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

5

The Scian and the Teian muse,

The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse ;

Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo farther west
Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest."

10

The mountains look on Marathon

And Marathon looks on the sea ;
And musing there an hour alone,

I dream'd that Greece might still be free ;
For standing on the Persian's grave
I could not deem myself a slave.

15

A king sat on the rocky brow

Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis ;

20

And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations — all were his!
He counted them at break of day —
And when the sun set where were they?

5 And where are they? and where art thou,
My country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now —
The heroic bosom beats no more!
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
10 Degenerate into hands like mine?

* * * * *

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
There, swanlike, let me sing and die:
15 A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine —
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

The Watch on the Rhine

A peal like thunder calls the brave,
With clash of sword and sound of wave,
The Rhine, the Rhine, the German Rhine!
20 Who now will guard the river's line?

CHORUS

Dear Fatherland, no fear be thine,
Dear Fatherland, no fear be thine,
Firm stands the guard along, along the Rhine,
Firm stands the guard along the German Rhine!

A hundred thousand hearts beat high, 5
The answer flames from ev'ry eye ;
The German youth devoted stand
To shield the holy borderland. — CHO.

So long as blood shall warm our veins,
While for the sword one hand remains, 10
One arm to bear a gun, no more
Shall foot of foeman tread thy shore. — CHO.

The oath resounds, the waves roll by,
The banners wave, advanced on high,
The Rhine, the Rhine, the German Rhine ! 15
We all will guard the river's line ! — CHO.

CLAUDE JOSEPH ROUGET DE LISLE

FRANCE, 1760-1836

The Marseillaise, 1792

Ye sons of France, awake to glory !
Hark, hark ! what myriads bid you rise !
Your children, wives, and grandsires hoary :

Behold their tears and hear their cries,
Behold their tears and hear their cries !
Shall hateful tyrants mischief breeding
With hireling hosts, a ruffian band,
5 Affright and desolate the land,
While peace and liberty be bleeding !

CHORUS

To arms, to arms, ye brave !
Th' avenging sword unsheathe !
March on, march on, all hearts resolved
10 On victory or death.

With luxury and pride surrounded,
The vile, insatiate despots dare,
Their thirst for gold and power unbounded,
To meet and rend the light and air,
15 To meet and rend the light and air.
Like beasts of burden would they load us,
Like gods, would bid their slaves adore ;
But man is man, and who is more ?
Then shall they longer lash and goad us ?

20 Oh, Liberty ! can man resign thee,
Once having felt the gen'rous flame ?
Can dungeons, bolts, and bars confine thee ?
Or whips thy noble spirit tame ?

Or whips thy noble spirit tame?
Too long the world has wept bewailing
That falsehood's dagger tyrants wield;
But freedom is our sword and shield,
And all their arts are unavailing.

5

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

AMERICA, 1794-1878

Song of Marion's Men

Our band is few but true and tried,
Our leader frank and bold;
The British soldier trembles
When Marion's name is told.

Our fortress is the good greenwood,
Our tent the cypress tree;
We know the forest round us,
As seamen know the sea.

10

We know its walls of thorny vines,
Its glades of reedy grass,
Its safe and silent islands
Within the dark morass.

15

Woe to the English soldiery
That little dread us near!

- On them shall light at midnight
A strange and sudden fear :
When, waking to their tents on fire,
They grasp their arms in vain,
5 And they who stand to face us
Are beat to earth again ;
And they who fly in terror deem
A mighty host behind,
And hear the tramp of thousands
10 Upon the hollow wind.
- Then sweet the hour that brings release
From danger and from toil :
We talk the battle over,
And share the battle's spoil.
15 The woodland rings with laugh and shout,
As if a hunt were up,
And woodland flowers are gathered
To crown the soldier's cup.
With merry songs we mock the wind
20 That in the pine top grieves,
And slumber long and sweetly
On beds of oaken leaves.

Well knows the fair and friendly moon
The band that Marion leads —

The glitter of their rifles,
The scampering of their steeds.
'Tis life to guide the fiery barb
Across the moonlight plain ;
'Tis life to feel the night wind 5
That lifts the tossing mane.
A moment in the British camp —
A moment — and away
Back to the pathless forest,
Before the peep of day. 10

Grave men there are by broad Santee,
Grave men with hoary hairs ;
Their hearts are all with Marion,
For Marion are their prayers.
And lovely ladies greet our band 15
With kindest welcoming,
With smiles like those of summer,
And tears like those of spring.
For them we wear these trusty arms,
And lay them down no more 20
Till we have driven the Briton,
Forever, from our shore.

WILLIAM COLLINS

ENGLAND, 1720-1756

Ode

How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blessed !
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mold,
5 She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung ;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung.
There Honor comes, a pilgrim gray,
10 To bless the turf that wraps their clay ;
And Freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there !

THOMAS BUCHANAN READ

AMERICA, 1822-1872

Sheridan's Ride

October 19, 1864

Up from the south at break of day,
Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,
15 The affrighted air of a sudden bore,
Like a herald in haste, to the chieftain's door,

The terrible grumble, and rumble and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war
Thundered along the horizon's bar, 5
And louder yet into Winchester rolled
The roar of that red sea uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,
With Sheridan twenty miles away. 10

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good broad highway leading down ;
And there, through the flash of the morning light,
A steed as black as the steeds of night
Was seen to pass as with eagle flight ; 15
As if he knew the terrible need,
He stretched away with utmost speed ;
Hills rose and fell — but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprung from those swift hoofs, thundering
south, 20
The dust, like smoke from the cannon's mouth ;
Or the trail of a comet, sweeping faster and faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster.

The heart of the steed and the heart of the master
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls,
Impatient to be where the battle field calls ;
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full
play,

5 With Sheridan only ten miles away.

Under his spurning feet the road
Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed,
And the landscape flowed away behind,
Like an ocean flying before the wind ;
10 And the steed, like a bark fed with furnace ire,
Swept on with his wild eyes full of fire ;
But lo ! he is nearing his heart's desire,
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away.

15 The first that the General saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops ;
What was done—what to do—a glance told
him both,
And striking his spurs, with a terrible oath,
He dashed down the lines 'mid a storm of
hurrahs,
20 And the wave of retreat checked its course there,
because
The sight of the master compelled it to pause.

With foam and with dust the black charger was
 gray,
 By the flash of his eye and the red nostril's play
 He seemed to the whole great army to say:
 "I've brought you Sheridan all the way
 From Winchester town to save the day!" 5

Hurrah! hurrah! for Sheridan!
 Hurrah! hurrah! for horse and man!
 And when their statues are placed on high,
 Under the dome of the Union sky —
 The American soldier's temple of fame — 10
 There with the glorious General's name,
 Be it said, in letters both bold and bright:
 "Here is the steed that saved the day,
 By carrying Sheridan into the fight
 From Winchester, twenty miles away!" 15

LEIGH HUNT

ENGLAND, 1774-1859

About Ben Adhem

About Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
 Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
 And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
 Making it rich, like a lily in bloom,

An angel, writing in a book of gold ;
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold :
And to the presence in the room he said,
“What writest thou?” The vision raised its head,
5 And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, “The names of those who love the
Lord.”
“And is mine one?” said Abou. “Nay, not
so,”
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still ; and said, “I pray thee, then,
10 Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.”
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again, with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had
blessed,
And, lo ! Ben Adhem’s name led all the rest.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

ENGLAND, 1564-1616

Orpheus with his Lute

15 Orpheus with his lute made trees,
And the mountain tops that freeze,
Bow themselves when he did sing :

To his music plants and flowers
Ever sprung, as sun and showers
There had made a lasting spring.

Everything that heard him play,
Even the billows of the sea, 5
Hung their heads, and then lay by.
In sweet music is such art,
Killing care and grief of heart
Fall asleep, or hearing, die.

— FROM "KING HENRY VIII."

ROBERT BURNS

SCOTLAND, 1759-1796

A Man's a Man for a' That

Is there for honest poverty 10
Who hangs his head, and a' that ?
The coward slave, we pass him by ;
We dare be poor for a' that,
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure, and a' that ; 15
The rank is but the guinea's stamp —
The man's the gowd for a' that !

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden gray, and a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine—
A man's a man for a' that!

5 For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that;
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that!

You see yon birkie ca'd a lord,
10 Wha struts, an' stares, an' a' that —
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that;
For a' that, and a' that,
His riband, star, and a' that;
15 The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might —
20 Gude faith, he mauna fa' that!
For a' that, and a' that.
Their dignities, and a' that,
The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
Are higher ranks than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
 As come it will for a' that.
 That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
 May bear the gree, an' a' that.
 For a' that, and a' that. 5
 It's coming yet for a' that —
 That man, to man, the warld o'er,
 Shall brothers be for a' that.

ALICE CARY

AMERICA, 1821-1871

Nobility

True worth is in being, not seeming,
 In doing each day, as it goes by, 10
 Some little good — not in the dreaming
 Of great things to do by and by.
 For whatever men say in blindness
 And spite of the fancies of youth,
 There's nothing so kingly as kindness 15
 And nothing so royal as truth.

We get back our mete, as we measure,
 We cannot do wrong and feel right,
 Nor can we give pain, and gain pleasure,
 For justice avenges each slight. 20

The air for the wing of the sparrow,
The bush for the robin and wren,
But always the path that is narrow
And straight for the children of men.

5 'Tis not in the pages of story
The heart of its ills to beguile
Though he who makes courtship to glory
Gives all that he hath for her smile.
For when from her heights he hath won her
10 Alas! it is only to prove,
That nothing's so sacred as honor,
And nothing so loyal as love.

We cannot make bargains for blisses,
Nor catch them like fishes in nets,
15 And sometimes the thing our life misses,
Helps more than the thing which it gets.
For good lieth not in pursuing
Nor gaining of great nor of small,
But just in the doing and doing
20 As we would be done by all.

Through envy, through malice, through hating
Against the world early and late,
No jot of our courage abating, —
Our part is to work and to wait.

And slight is the sting of his trouble
Whose winnings are less than his worth,
For he who is honest is noble
Whatever his fortune or birth.

WILLIAM BLAKE

ENGLAND, 1757-1827


The Tiger

Tiger, tiger, burning bright, 5
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes? 10
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat, 15
What dread hand forged thy dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?



What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered Heaven with their tears,
5 Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

Tiger, tiger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
10 Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

AMERICA, 1803-1882

Forbearance

Hast thou named all the birds without a gun?
Loved the wood rose, and left it on its stalk?
At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse?
Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust?
15 And loved so well a high behavior,
In man or maid, that thou from speech refrained,
Nobility more nobly to repay?
O, be my friend, and teach me to be thine.

SIXTH YEAR — SECOND HALF

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

AMERICA, 1794-1878


March

The stormy March is come at last,
With wind, and cloud, and changing skies;
I hear the rushing of the blast,
That through the snowy valley flies.

Ah, passing few are they who speak, 5
Wild, stormy month! in praise of thee;
Yet though thy winds are loud and bleak,
Thou art a welcome month to me.

For thou, to northern lands, again
The glad and glorious sun dost bring, 10
And thou hast joined the gentle train
And wear'st the gentle name of Spring.

And, in thy reign of blast and storm,
Smiles many a long, bright, sunny day,
When the changed winds are soft and warm, 15
And heaven puts on the blue of May.



Then sing aloud the gushing rills
In joy that they again are free,
And, brightly leaping down the hills,
Renew their journey to the sea.

5 The year's departing beauty hides
Of wintry storms the sullen threat;
But in thy sternest frown abides
A look of kindly promise yet.

10 Thou bring'st the hope of those calm skies,
And that soft time of sunny showers,
When the wide bloom, on earth that lies,
Seems of a brighter world than ours.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

AMERICA, 1803-1882

The Rhodora

On being asked whence is the Flower

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
15 Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay ;

Here might the redbird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! If the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing, 5
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew:
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there
brought you. 10

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

AMERICA, 1819-1891

To the Dandelion

Dear common flower, that grow'st beside the way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,
First pledge of blithesome May,
Which children pluck, and, full of pride, up-
hold,
High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they 15
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample round
May match in wealth — thou art more dear to me
Than all the prouder summer blooms may be.

- Gold such as thine ne'er drew the Spanish prow
Through the primeval hush of Indian seas,
Nor wrinkled the lean brow
Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease ;
5 'Tis the Spring's largess which she scatters now
To rich and poor alike, with lavish hand,
Though most hearts never understand
To take it at God's value, but pass by
The offered wealth with unrewarded eye.
- 10 Thou art my tropics and mine Italy ;
To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime ;
The eyes thou givest me
Are in the heart and heed not space or time ;
Not in mid June the golden-cuirassed bee
15 Feels a more summerlike, warm ravishment
In the white lily's breezy tent,
His fragrant Sybaris, than I, when first
From the dark green thy yellow circles burst.
- Then think I of deep shadows in the grass, —
20 Of meadows where in sun the cattle graze,
Where, as the breezes pass,
The gleaming rushes lean a thousand ways, —
Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy mass,
Or whiten in the wind, — or waters blue
25 That from the distance sparkle through

Some woodland gap, — and of a sky above
Where one white cloud like a stray lamb doth
move.

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked with
thee.

The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,
Who, from the dark old tree

Beside the door, sang clearly all day long,
And I, secure in childish piety,
Listened as if I heard an angel sing
With news from Heaven, which he could
bring

Fresh every day to my untainted ears,
When birds and flowers and I were happy peers.

Thou art the type of those meek charities

Which make up half the nobleness of life ;
Those cheap delights the wise

Pluck from the dusty wayside of earth's strife ;
Words of frank cheer, glances of friendly eyes,
Love's smallest coin, which yet to some may
give

The morsel that may keep alive
A starving heart, and teach it to behold
Some glimpse of God where all before was cold.

- Thy winged seeds, whereof the winds take care,
Are like the words of poet and of sage
Which through the free Heaven fare,
And, now unheeded, in another age
5 Take root, and to the gladdened future bear
That witness which the present would not
heed,
Bringing forth many a thought and deed,
And, planted safely in the eternal sky,
Bloom into stars which earth is guided by.
- 10 Full of deep love thou art, yet not more full
Than all thy common brethren of the ground,
Wherein, were we not dull,
Some words of highest wisdom might be found;
Yet earnest faith from day to day may cull
15 Some syllables, which, rightly joined, can make
A spell to soothe life's bitterest ache,
And ope Heaven's portals, which are near us
still,
Yea, nearer ever than the gates of Ill.
- How like a prodigal doth Nature seem,
20 When thou, for all thy gold, so common art!
Thou teachest me to deem
More sacredly of every human heart,
Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam

Of Heaven, and could some wondrous secret
show,

Did we but pay the love we owe,
And with a child's undoubting wisdom look
On all these living pages of God's book.

But let me read thy lesson right or no, 5
Of one good gift from thee my heart is sure;
Old I shall never grow

While thou each year dost come to keep me pure
With legends of my childhood; ah, we owe
Well more than half life's holiness to these 10

Nature's first lowly influences,
At thought of which the heart's glad doors burst
ope,
In dreariest days, to welcome peace and hope.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

ENGLAND, 1770-1850

To a Skylark

Ethereal minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
Dost thou despise the earth where cares
abound? 15
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?

Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music
still!

To the last point of vision, and beyond,
Mount, daring warbler! that love-prompted
strain

5 ('Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond)
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege! to sing
All independent of the leafy spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
10 A privacy of glorious light is thine,
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine:
Type of the wise who soar, but never roam;
True to the kindred points of heaven and home!

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

ENGLAND, 1809-1861

A Musical Instrument

15 What was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,

Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river: 5
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sat the great god Pan, 10
While turbidly flowed the river;
And hacked and hewed as a great god can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of the leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river. 15

He cut it short, did the great god Pan
(How tall it stood in the river!),
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notched the poor dry empty thing 20
In holes, as he sat by the river.

"This is the way," laughed the great god Pan
(Laughed while he sat by the river),
"The only way, since gods began

To make sweet music, they could succeed."
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan !

5 Piercing sweet by the river !
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan !
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon fly
Came back to dream on the river.

10 Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man :
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain, —
For the reed which grows nevermore again
15 As a reed with the reeds in the river.

ALFRED TENNYSON

ENGLAND, 1809-1892

"Break, Break, Break"

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O sea !
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on 5
To their haven under the hill;
But oh, for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still! .

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O sea! 10
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

AMERICA, 1794-1878

To the Evening Wind

Spirit that breathest through my lattice, thou
That cool'st the twilight of the sultry day,
Gratefully flows thy freshness round my brow; 15
Thou hast been out upon the deep at play,
Riding, all day, the wild blue waves till now,
Roughening their crests, and scattering high
their spray,
And swelling the white sail. I welcome thee
To the scorched land, thou wanderer of the sea! 20

Nor I alone, — a thousand bosoms round
Inhale thee in the fullness of delight;
And languid forms rise up, and pulses bound
Livelier, at coming of the wind of night;
5 And, languishing to hear thy grateful sound,
Lies the vast inland stretched beyond the
sight.

Go forth, into the gathering shade; go forth,
God's blessing breathed upon the fainting earth!

Go, rock the little wood bird in his nest,
Curl the still waters, bright with stars; and
10 rouse
The wide old wood from his majestic rest,
Summoning from the innumerable boughs
The strange, deep harmonies that haunt his
breast;
Pleasant shall be thy way where meekly bows
15 The shutting flower, and darkling waters pass,
And 'twixt the o'ershadowing branches and the
grass.

The faint old man shall lean his silver head
To feel thee; thou shalt kiss the child asleep,
And dry the moistened curls that overspread
His temples, while his breathing grows more
20 deep;

And they who stand about the sick man's bed,
Shall joy to listen to thy distant sweep,
And softly part his curtains to allow
Thy visit, grateful to his burning brow.

Go — but the circle of eternal change, 5
Which is the life of nature, shall restore,
With sounds and scents from all thy mighty
range,
Thee to thy birthplace of the deep once more :
Sweet odors in the sea air, sweet and strange,
Shall tell the homesick mariner of the shore ; 10
And, listening to thy murmur, he shall deem
He hears the rustling leaf and running stream.

ROBERT SOUTHEY

ENGLAND, 1774-1843

Night

How beautiful is night !
A dewy freshness fills the silent air ;
No mist obscures, nor cloud, nor speck, nor stain, 15
Breaks the serene of heaven :
In full-orb'd glory yonder Moon divine
Rolls through the dark-blue depths.

Beneath her steady ray
The desert-circle spreads,
Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky.
How beautiful is night!

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

AMERICA, 1794-1878

The White-footed Deer

5 It was a hundred years ago,
 When, by the woodland ways,
 The traveler saw the wild deer drink,
 Or crop the birchen sprays.

 Beneath the hill, whose rocky side
10 O'erbrowed a grassy mead,
 And fenced a cottage from the wind,
 A deer was wont to feed.

 She only came when on the cliffs
 The evening moonlight lay,
15 And no man knew the secret haunts
 In which she walked by day.

 White were her feet, her forehead showed
 A spot of silvery white,
 That seemed to glimmer like a star
20 In autumn's hazy night.

And here, when sang the whippoorwill,
She cropped the sprouting leaves,
And here her rustling steps were heard
On still October eves.

But when the broad midsummer moon 5
Rose o'er that grassy lawn,
Beside the silver-footed deer
There grazed a spotted fawn.

The cottage dame forbade her son
To aim the rifle here, 10
"It were a sin," she said, "to harm
Or fright that friendly deer.

"This spot has been my pleasant home
Ten peaceful years and more ;
And even, when the moonlight shines, 15
She feeds before our door.

"The red men say that here she walked
A thousand moons ago ;
They never raise the war whoop here,
And never twang the bow. 20

"I love to watch her as she feeds,
And think that all is well

While such a gentle creature haunts
The place in which we dwell."

The youth obeyed, and sought for game
In forests far away,
5 Where, deep in silence and in moss,
The ancient woodland lay.

But once, in autumn's golden time
He ranged the wild in vain,
Nor roused the pheasant nor the deer.
10 And wandered home again.

The crescent moon and crimson eve
Shone with a mingling light ;
The deer, upon the grassy mead,
Was feeding full in sight.

15 He raised the rifle to his eye,
And from the cliffs around
A sudden echo, shrill and sharp,
Gave back its deadly sound.

Away, into the neighboring wood,
20 The startled creature flew,
And crimson drops at morning lay
Amid the glimmering dew.

Next evening shone the waxing moon
As brightly as before ;
The deer upon the grassy mead
Was seen again no more.

But ere that crescent moon was old, 5
By night the red men came,
And burnt the cottage to the ground,
And slew the youth and dame.

Now woods have overgrown the mead,
And hid the cliffs from sight ;
There shrieks the hovering hawk at noon,
And prowls the fox at night.

ALFRED TENNYSON

ENGLAND, 1809-1892

The Eagle

He clasps the crag with crooked hands ;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world, he stands. 15

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls ;
He watches from his mountain walls ;
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

AMERICA, 1807-1892

Winter

The sun that brief December day
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
And, darkly circled, gave at noon
A sadder light than waning moon.
5 Slow tracing down the thickening sky
Its mute and ominous prophecy,
A portent seeming less than threat,
It sank from sight before it set.
A chill no coat, however stout,
10 Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,
A hard, dull bitterness of cold,
That checked, mid-vein, the circling race
Of lifeblood in the sharpened face,
The coming of the snowstorm told.
15 The wind blew east; we heard the roar
Of Ocean on his wintry shore,
And felt the strong pulse throbbing there
Beat with low rhythm our inland air.

Meanwhile we did our nightly chores, —
20 Brought in the wood from out of doors,
Littered the stalls, and from the mows
Raked down the herd's grass for the cows:

Heard the horse whinnying for his corn ;
And, sharply clashing horn on horn,
Impatient down the stanchion rows
The cattle shake their walnut bows ;
While, peering from his early perch 5
Upon the scaffold's pole of birch,
The cock his crested helmet bent
And down his querulous challenge sent.

Unwarmed by any sunset light
The gray day darkened into night, 10
A night made hoary with the swarm
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,
As zigzag wavering to and fro
Crossed and recrossed the wingèd snow :
And ere the early bedtime came 15
The white drift piled the window frame,
And through the glass the clothesline posts
Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.
So all night long the storm roared on :
The morning broke without a sun ; 20
In tiny spherule traced with lines
Of Nature's geometric signs,
In starry flake and pellicle
All day the hoary meteor fell ;
And, when the second morning shone, 25

- We looked upon a world unknown,
On nothing we could call our own.
Around the glistening wonder bent
The blue walls of the firmament,
5 No cloud above, no earth below, —
A universe of sky and snow!
The old familiar sights of ours
Took marvelous shapes; strange domes and towers
Rose up where sty or corncrib stood,
10 Or garden wall or belt of wood;
A smooth white mound the brush pile showed,
A fenceless drift what once was road;
The bridle post an old man sat
With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat;
15 The well curb had a Chinese roof;
And even the long sweep, high aloof,
In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

— FROM "SNOW-BOUND."

JOSIAH GILBERT HOLLAND

AMERICA, 1819-1881

A Christmas Carol

- 20 There's a song in the air!
 There's a star in the sky!
 There's a mother's deep prayer

And a baby's low cry!
And the star rains its fire while the Beautiful
sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a king.

There's a tumult of joy
O'er the wonderful birth, 5
For the virgin's sweet boy
Is the Lord of the earth.
Ay! the star rains its fire and the Beautiful
sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a king!

In the light of that star 10
Lie the ages impearled;
And that song from afar
Has swept over the world.
Every hearth is aflame, and the Beautiful sing
In the homes of the nations that Jesus is king. 15

We rejoice in the light,
And we echo the song
That comes down through the night
From the heavenly throng.
Ay! we shout to the lovely evangel they bring, 20
And we greet in his cradle our Saviour and
King!

SIR WALTER SCOTT

SCOTLAND, 1771-1832

"Harp of the North"

Harp of the North! that moldering long hast
hung

On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's
spring,

And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,

Till envious ivy did around thee cling,

5 Muffling with verdant ringlet every string, —

O minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep?

Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,

Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,

Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?

10 Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,

Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,

When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,

Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud.

At each according pause, was heard aloud

15 Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!

Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bow'd;

For still the burden of thy minstrelsy

Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's

matchless eye.

O, wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray;
O, wake once more! though scarce my skill command

Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay:
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away, 5
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,
The wizard note has not been touch'd in vain.
Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake
again!

—FROM "THE LADY OF THE LAKE."

ROBERT BROWNING

ENGLAND, 1812-1889

**How they brought the Good News from Ghent
to Aix**

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he; 10
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;
"Good speed!" cried the watch, as the gate
bolts undrew;
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping
through;
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast. 15

Not a word to each other ; we kept the great
pace

Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing
our place ;

I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique
right,

5 Rebuckled the cheek strap, chained slacker the
bit,

Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting ; but, while we drew
near

Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned
clear ;

At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see ;

10 At Düffeld 'twas morning as plain as could be ;
And from Mecheln church steeple we heard the
half chime,

So, Joris broke silence with, " Yet there is time ! "

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every
one,

15 To stare thro' the mist at us galloping past,
And I saw my stout galloper Roland, at last,

With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray :

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear
bent back

For my voice, and the other out on his track ;
And one eye's black intelligence, — ever that
glance 5

O'er its white edge at me, his own master,
askance !

And the thick heavy spume flakes which aye
and anon

His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned ; and cried Joris,
“ Stay spur !

Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her, 10
We'll remember at Aix ” — for one heard the
quick wheeze

Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and stag-
gering knees,

And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and
sank.

So we were left galloping, Joris and I, 15
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky ;

The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble
like chaff,

Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is in
sight!"

5 "How they'll greet us!" — and all in a moment
his roan

Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole
weight

Of the news which alone could save Aix from
her fate,

With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the
brim,

10 And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buff coat, each holster let
fall,

Shook off both my jack boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet name, my horse with-
out peer;

15 Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise,
bad or good,

Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is, friends flocking round
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the
ground ;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of
mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of
wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent) ^s
Was no more than his due who brought good
news from Ghent.

CHARLES WOLFE


IRELAND, 1791-1823

The Burial of Sir John Moore

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried ;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried. 10

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning ;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin inclosed his breast, 15
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him ;



But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow ;
5 But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was
dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed,
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er
his head,
10 And we far away on the billow !

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him, —
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

15 But half of our heavy task was done,
When the clock struck the hour for retiring ;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
20 From the field of his fame fresh and gory ;

We carved not a line, and we raised not a
stone —

But we left him alone with his glory.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

SCOTLAND, 1771-1832

My Native Land

Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,

“This is my own, my native land!” 5

Whose heart hath ne’er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned
From wandering on a foreign strand?

If such there breathe, go, mark him well!
For him no minstrel raptures swell. 10

High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim —

Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentered all in self,
Living shall forfeit fair renown, 15

And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.

—FROM “THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.”

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

AMERICA, 1809-1894

Old Ironsides

Aye, tear her tattered ensign down !
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky ;
5 Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar ;—
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more.

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
10 Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee ;
15 The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea !

Oh, better that her tattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave ;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
20 And there should be her grave :

Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale!

FRANCIS MILES FINCH

AMERICA, 1827-

The Blue and the Gray

By the flow of the inland river	5
Whence the fleets of iron have fled,	
Where the blades of grave-grass quiver	
Asleep are the ranks of the dead :	
Under the sod and the dew,	
Waiting the judgment day ;	10
Under the one, the Blue,	
Under the other, the Gray.	
These in the robings of glory,	
Those in the gloom of defeat,	
All with the battle blood gory	15
In the dusk of Eternity meet :	
Under the sod and the dew,	
Waiting the judgment day ;	
Under the laurel, the Blue,	
Under the willow, the Gray.	20

From the silence of sorrowful hours,
The desolate mourners go,
Lovingly laden with flowers
Alike for the friend and the foe :
5 Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day ;
Under the roses, the Blue,
Under the lilies, the Gray.

So with an equal splendor
10 The morning sun rays fall,
With a touch impartially tender,
On the blossoms blooming for all :
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day ;
15 Brodered with gold, the Blue,
Mellowed with gold, the Gray.

So, when the summer calleth,
On forest and field of grain,
With an equal murmur falleth
20 The cooling drip of the rain :
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day ;
Wet with the rain, the Blue,
Wet with the rain, the Gray.

Sadly, but not with upbraiding,
The generous deed was done,
In the storm of the years that are fading
No braver battle was won :
Under the sod and the dew, 5
Waiting the judgment day ;
Under the blossoms, the Blue,
Under the garlands, the Gray.

No more shall the war cry sever,
Or the winding rivers be red ; 10
They banish our anger forever
When they laurel the graves of our dead !
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day ;
Love and tears for the Blue, 15
Tears and love for the Gray.

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

AMERICA, 1795-1820

The American Flag

When Freedom from her mountain height
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there. 20

She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldrick of the skies,
And striped its pure celestial white
With streakings of the morning light ;
5 Then from his mansion in the sun
She called her eagle bearer down,
And gave into his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land.

Majestic monarch of the cloud,
10 Who rear'st aloft thy regal form
To hear the tempest trummings loud
And see the lightning lances driven
When strive the warriors of the storm
And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven,
15 Child of the sun ! to thee 'tis given
To guard the banner of the free,
To hover in the sulphur smoke,
To ward away the battle stroke,
And bid its blendings shine afar,
20 Like rainbows on the cloud of war,
The harbingers of victory !

Flag of the brave ! thy folds shall fly,
The sign of hope and triumph high,
When speaks the signal trumpet tone,

And the long line comes gleaming on.
Ere yet the lifeblood, warm and wet,
Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,
Each soldier eye shall brightly turn,
To where thy sky-born glories burn, 5
And, as his springing steps advance,
Catch war and vengeance from the glance.
And when the cannon-mouthings loud
Heave in wild wreaths the battle shroud,
And gory sabers rise and fall 10
Like shoots of flame on midnight's pall,
Then shall thy meteor glances glow,
And cowering foes shall shrink beneath
Each gallant arm that strikes below
That lovely messenger of death. 15

Flag of the seas! on ocean wave
Thy stars shall glitter o'er the brave;
When death, careering on the gale,
Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail,
And frightened waves rush wildly back 20
Before the broadside's reeling rack,
Each dying wanderer of the sea
Shall look at once to heaven and thee,
And smile to see thy splendors fly
In triumph o'er his closing eye. 25

- Flag of the free heart's hope and home !
By angel hands to valor given ;
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven.
5 Forever float the standard sheet !
Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us.
-

HOMER

GREECE, ABOUT 1200 B.C.

Hector's Prayer

- " O Jupiter and all ye deities,
10 Vouchsafe that this, my son, may yet become
Among the Trojans eminent like me,
And nobly rule in Ilium. May they say,
' This man was greater than his father was ! '
When they behold him from the battlefield
15 Bring back the bloody spoil of the slain foe, —
That so his mother may be glad at heart."

—FROM THE "ILIAD," BRYANT'S TRANSLATION.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

AMERICA, 1807-1882

The Builders

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time ;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

Nothing useless is, or low ;
Each thing in its place is best ;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest. 5

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled ;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build. 10

Truly shaped and fashioned these ;
Leave no yawning gaps between ;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen. 15

In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part ;
For the gods see everywhere. 20

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen ;
Make the house, where God may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean.

5 Else our lives are incomplete,
Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways, where the feet
Stumble as they seek to climb.

Build to-day, then, strong and sure,
10 With a firm and ample base ;
And ascending and secure
Shall to-morrow find its place.

Thus alone can we attain
To those turrets, where the eye
15 Sees the world as one vast plain,
And one boundless reach of sky.

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER

ENGLAND, 1825-1864

One by One

One by one the sands are flowing,
One by one the moments fall ;
Some are coming, some are going ;
20 Do not strive to grasp them all.

One by one thy duties wait thee,
Let thy whole strength go to each ;
Let no further dreams elate thee,
Learn thou first what these can teach.

One by one (bright gifts from Heaven) 5
Joys are sent thee here below ;
Take them readily when given,
Ready, too, to let them go.

One by one thy griefs shall meet thee,
Do not fear an armèd band ; 10
One will fade as others greet thee ;
Shadows passing through the land.

Do not look at life's long sorrow ;
See how small each moment's pain ;
God will help thee for to-morrow, 15
So each day begin again.

Every hour that fleets so slowly
Has its task to do or bear ;
Luminous the crown, and holy,
When each gem is set with care. 20

Do not linger with regretting,
Or for passing hours despond ;
Nor, the daily toil forgetting,
Look too eagerly beyond.

Hours are golden links, God's token
Reaching heaven ; but one by one
Take them, lest the chain be broken
Ere the pilgrimage be done.

CAROLINE NORTON

ENGLAND, 1808-1877

We have been Friends together

- 5 We have been friends together,
In sunshine and in shade,
Since first beneath the chestnut trees
In infancy we played.
But coldness dwells within thy heart —
10 A cloud is on thy brow ;
We have been friends together —
Shall a light word part us now ?
- We have been gay together ;
We have laughed at little jests :
15 For the fount of hope was gushing,
Warm and joyous, in our breasts.
But laughter now hath fled thy lip,
And sullen glooms thy brow :
We have been gay together —
20 Shall a light word part us now ?

We have been sad together —
We have wept, with bitter tears,
O'er the grass-grown graves, where slumbered
The hopes of early years.
The voices which are silent there 5
Would bid thee clear thy brow ;
We have been sad together —
Oh ! what shall part us now ?

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

AMERICA, 1807-1882

The Ladder of St. Augustine

Saint Augustine ! well hast thou said,
That of our vices we can frame 10
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame !

All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents, 15
Are rounds by which we may ascend.

The low desire, the base design,
That makes another's virtues less ;
The revel of the ruddy wine,
And all occasions of excess ; 20

The longing for ignoble things ;
The strife for triumph more than truth ;
The hardening of the heart, that brings
Irreverence for the dreams of youth ;

5 All thoughts of ill ; all evil deeds,
That have their root in thoughts of ill ;
Whatever hinders or impedes
The action of the nobler will ; —

All these must first be trampled down
10 Beneath our feet, if we would gain
In the bright fields of fair renown
The right of eminent domain.

We have not wings, we cannot soar ;
But we have feet to scale and climb
15 By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

The mighty pyramids of stone
That wedgelike cleave the desert airs,
When nearer seen, and better known,
20 Are but gigantic flights of stairs.

The distant mountains, that uprear
Their solid bastions to the skies,
Are crossed by pathways, that appear
As we to higher levels rise.

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight ;
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

Standing on what too long we bore 5
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
We may discern — unseen before —
A path to higher destinies.

Nor deem the irrevocable Past,
As wholly wasted, wholly vain, 10
If, rising on its wrecks, at last
To something nobler we attain.

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH

ENGLAND, 1807-1886

Be Patient

Be patient! Oh, be patient! Put your ear
against the earth ;
Listen there how noiselessly the germ o' the
seed has birth —
How noiselessly and gently it upheaves its little
way, 15
Till it parts the scarcely broken ground, and the
blade stands up in the day.

Be patient! Oh, be patient! The germs of
mighty thought
Must have their silent undergrowth, must under-
ground be wrought;
But as sure as there's a power that makes the
grass appear,
Our land shall be green with liberty, the blade
time shall be here.

5 Be patient! Oh, be patient!—go and watch the
wheat ears grow—
So imperceptibly that ye can mark nor change
nor throe—
Day after day, day after day, till the ear is fully
grown,
And then again day after day, till the ripened
field is brown.

Be patient! Oh, be patient!—though yet our
hopes are green,
10 The harvest fields of freedom will be crowned
with sunny sheen.
Be ripening! be ripening!—mature your silent
way,
Till the whole broad land is tongued with fire on
freedom's harvest day.

GEORGE HERBERT

ENGLAND, 1593-1632

Virtue

**Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky !
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night ;
For thou must die.**

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye!
Thy root is ever in its grave —
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie ;
Thy music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives ;
But, though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

GEORGE HERBERT

ENGLAND, 1593-1632

My Flowers—Life

I made a posy, while the day ran by,
Here will I smell my remnant out, and tie
My life within this band.
But Time did beckon to the flowers, and they
5 By noon most cunningly did steal away
And wither in my hand.

* * * * *

Farewell, dear flowers, sweetly your time ye spent,
Fit, while ye lived, for smell or ornament,
And after death for cures ;
10 I follow straight without complaint or grief,
Since if my life be brief, I care not, if
It be as sweet as yours.

JOSEPH ADDISON

ENGLAND, 1672-1719

An Ode

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
15 And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.

The unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display ;
And publishes to every land
The work of an almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail, 5
The moon takes up the wond'rous tale,
And nightly, to the listening earth,
Repeats the story of her birth ;
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn, 10
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though, in solemn silence, all
Move round this dark, terrestrial ball, —
What though nor real voice nor sound 15
Amidst their radiant orbs be found, —
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
Forever singing as they shine,
"The hand that made us is divine !" 20



